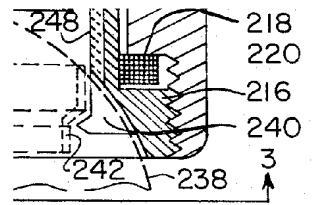
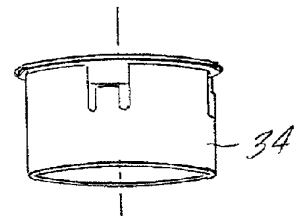


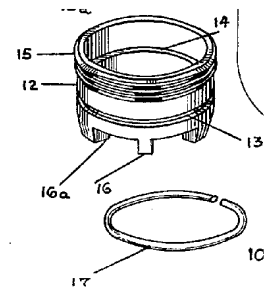
The combination of Aghnides, Griffin and Richter does not disclose or suggest at least this feature of independent claim 15. As previously discussed, and as illustrated in the enlarged view of a portion of FIG. 2 of Aghnides' aerator (reproduced on the right), seal 218 is not in an annular groove and does not "seal in the radial direction".



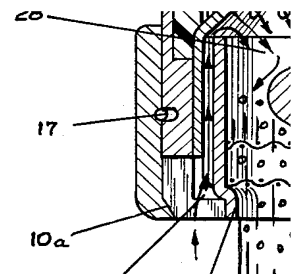
Similarly, as illustrated in the enlarged view of a portion of Fig. 2 of Griffin (reproduced on the right), outer throttle member 34, which is relied upon as corresponding to the claimed intermediate holder, does not include an annular groove and does not hold an annular seal.



Recognizing the deficiencies of Aghnides and Griffin, the Office Action relies upon groove 13 in second housing 12 of Richter as corresponding to the claimed intermediate holder with an annular groove and ring 17 of Richter as corresponding to the claimed annular seal, which are illustrated in Fig. 1 of Richter (a portion of which is reproduced on the right).



Ring 17 of Richter is "formed of a spring material".² Accordingly, as illustrated in Fig. 2 of Richter (a portion of which is reproduced on the right), when the aerating device is installed in a faucet, ring 17 springs into a groove formed in housing section 10, leaving a space in groove 13 of second housing section 12. Due



² Column 2, line 59.

to this space, ring 17 does not provide “a seal in the radial direction between the intermediate holder (6) and an inner periphery of the fitting outlet (4)” as recited in claim 15.

Additionally, although the Office Action states that Aghnides discloses “an intermediate holder that holds the insertion cartridge”, the Office Action does not identify any elements of Aghnides as corresponding to the claimed intermediate holder. Regardless, Aghnides does not disclose or suggest an intermediate holder generally, much less one arranged as required by claim 15.

Independent claims 41 and 42 recite similar elements and are patentably distinguishable over the combination of Aghnides, Griffin and Richter for similar reasons. Claims 16, 18-23, 25 and 27-41 are patentably distinguishable at least by virtue of their dependency from independent claim 15.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 15, 16, 18-23, 25 and 27-42 for obviousness be withdrawn.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323, Docket No. 105433.62118US.

February 1, 2011

CROWELL & MORING LLP
P.O. Box 14300
Washington, DC 20044-4300
14347992

Respectfully submitted,

/Stephen W. Palan, Reg. No. 43,420/
Stephen W. Palan
Registration No. 43,420